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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Service Management
Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings

Name: Howard Dixon Date: 08/18/00 SS# _____

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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Service Management

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ABSTRACT

This project builds a basic knowledge for the business traveler visiting Italy about protocol and cultural awareness. For those who have not been to Italy or lived there, this guide will enlighten those contemplating a trip to Italy and advise them about what to expect.

The protocol and cultural characteristics will be addressed. This will include: country familiarization, culture differences, cultural awareness, language briefing, social dos and don'ts, business practices, procedures and knowledge of business in Italy.

In addition, this project builds added awareness from several seasoned travelers. Each of these travelers have spent considerable time doing business in Italy. Their knowledge helped to confirm the work established in the literature review and intercultural training program model.

DEDICATED TO

My Grandmother

Ida M. Coleman

Thank you for all of your of

Your many sacrifices.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Protocol is really a fancy name for manners and etiquette. It is a set of rules that must be adhered to by the government, private industries and all countries throughout the world.

Imagine the chaos if everyone ran rampant, doing whatever they wanted to do, with no rules or attention to detail, when visiting a foreign country to conduct business. Business efforts may be enhanced if there was a source of information American companies doing business overseas could use. This study will focus on Italy.

There are many executives from the United States who travel to foreign countries to negotiate business. However, Americans are creatures of habit and they want to get right to the point, close the deal and shake hands. The majority of foreign business people are not in accord with this procedure. It may take days before they reach a decision.

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the procedures that will equip participants with cultural awareness information necessary to interact effectively with Italian business people.

This study may eliminate unacceptable and embarrassing behavior occurring because of cultural ignorance. Conducting business

in a manner respectful of the host country's culture may enhance profitability and the willingness of those employees to work internationally.

A variety of sources will be used in the literature review section to provide a background on the subject. An abundance of this information was gained by the author and learned from actual experience while he worked at the United States Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. as deputy assistant to the Secretary and Chief of Protocol and International Logistics for Secretary Malcolm Baldrige. In addition, further information was assimilated from the United States Department of State and applied to foreign country trips the author made when detailed to the White House for Vice President Bush visits to foreign countries. Prior to this, there were several round-the-world trips made with Nelson A. Rockefeller, then Vice President of the United States.

The author currently is the Special Events Coordinator- Constituent Relations for Senator Joseph Bruno, the Majority Leader of the New York State Senate. He also owns and operates Advance International, a firm that coordinates proper advance protocol procedures for business executives traveling abroad.

The procedures in this study unfold through the use of past experiences, personal knowledge on the subject matter, and

interviews conducted with well-traveled business persons who travel extensively to Italy. This study may assist the reader in realizing which behaviors will be mutually beneficial to the companies involved when conducting business globally.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

To be successful in any endeavor a person has to be trained. It is virtually impossible to engage in any enterprise without education. You must acquire the knowledge from one source or another whether from books, college professors or practical experience. This is the reason intercultural training is essential for those seeking success and mandatory for one to acquire the basics that encompass a country's culture, its values, standards and business practices.

CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Americans quite often are unaware of their ignorance regarding other nations. The people in other countries are pleased when you show that you care and have an interest in them. One of the post-war success stories of Europe is Italy. They are presently going through a major economic boom. In our world marketplace, to learn the customs and business manners of foreign countries is crucial. These items should include the approaches in decision-making, the effect of oral agreements, guidelines to business, entertaining and even gift giving. One needs to be open minded in order to understand others and communicate with them.

THE NEED FOR INTERCULTURAL TRAINING

If one knows the basic rules of both protocol and etiquette it will

help avoid embarrassing and uncomfortable situations. As more and more companies conduct business around the world, they find there is a greater need to acquire the basics in etiquette and protocol. A company that is sending a person or people to Italy should realize the better educated and informed they are about the country, the more successful the business pursuit may be.

The following examples show why it is necessary to know the rules and cultures of a country.

A United States Chief of Staff for the First Lady in the White House ordered six dozen beautiful blue leather frames as a state gift for officials of India. Each gift was embossed with the presidential seal. It was not until the gifts were unpacked for presentation that the Chief of Staff discovered the frames were made of cowhide. The cow is considered sacred in the country of India. Giving such a gift to a Hindu could have caused an international incident.

The name Coca-Cola in China was first rendered as Ke-kou-ke-la. Unfortunately for the company, it was only after thousands of signs had been printed that it learned the word translated into Chinese meant "bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax". Coke then researched 40,000 Chinese characters and found a close phonetic equivalent, Ko-kou-ko-le, which can be loosely translated to "happiness in the mouth".

In Taiwan the translation of the Pepsi slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead". In Chinese, the Kentucky Fried Chicken slogan, "finger-lickin' good" translated to "eat your fingers off".

The following goofs and gaffes happened in the Washington, D.C. and New York City areas. When a head of state visits the President at the White House, the ceremonial flags of his or her country are flown on all the flag poles around the White House area. There was an incident whereby the Portuguese flags were still flying as the Italian president's motorcade approached in the distance. The U.S. protocol press officer caught the gaffe in time to have the flags switched prior to the motorcade arrival.

The Japanese Crown Prince arrived at the Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath. However, the Japanese Embassy had forgotten to order one. A protocol advance officer went around to several graves, stole flowers from each one and made a wreath using paper clips. No one in the Japanese entourage ever knew.

One of our presidents was staying in New York City at the Waldorf Astoria. One of his guests at the luncheon was the King of Morocco. As the Chief of Protocol was entering the kitchen to check the food, the butler was on his way out with the first course, melon and prosciutto. The Chief of protocol advised the butler to return the

dish to the kitchen because Moslems do not eat pork.

Another president was whirling Her Majesty around on the dance floor at a state dinner, when everyone in the room became aware that the band was playing "The Lady is a Tramp".

It was very important for another president to make a good impression on his guest. At a very private dinner in the living quarters of the White House, the President was entertaining an Italian diplomat. At the conclusion of the main course, the butler presented finger bowls to everyone. The President looked at it, picked it up and drank the water. Everyone watched in amazement and bewilderment. With that, all the guests picked up their finger bowls and drank the water. Obviously, the President was not informed of the etiquette pertaining to the use of finger bowls.

The following should be adhered to and never given as gifts to people of the following countries:

Clocks should not be given to the Chinese or Thais as they symbolize the ticking away of time approaching demise.

A bad omen to Arabs are owls.

No briefcases or picture frames made of calfskin should be presented to Hindus. They consider the cow sacred.

No pigskin items should be given to Moslems.

Nearly everywhere overseas, a letter opener or knife is

considered unlucky.

Every possible precaution must be taken against accidental insult. If you insult an ambassador, you insult an entire nation.

As shown in the examples above, it is critical for anyone doing business with other countries and cultures to be educated on protocol and etiquette prior to their meeting. There are training programs available through classes, workshops, seminars, books, films, and the Internet.

THE BENEFITS OF INTERCULTURAL TRAINING

The benefits derived from intercultural training will be immeasurable. One gains knowledge that will be advantageous in having a better understanding of a country and its culture.

As Dr. Kelly has stated in his article, When in Rome...

One of the most noticeable American traits is individuality - The American is, as many have observed extremely individualistic. But despite the oft heard value he places on independence of mind and speech, he is paradoxically oriented to the group - he is a team worker. This observation must strike a foreign observer as being incompatible, but Americans are pragmatic, at least to the extent that they place a considerable value on workability, even at the expense of individual expression. Team players are allowed to be individuals, but certainly not at the expense of the team meeting its goals. The effectiveness of the American executive in another country is directly proportional to his ability and willingness to adapt to the local culture, and not simply pull from his cultural suitcase that which works at home. In fact, failure to adapt often spells failure in the business venture.

The astute businessman can pick up many cultural clues simply through observation. Obviously, it is impossible to become knowledgeable about every aspect of a country's culture. In fact, many mistake the different levels existing in cultural languages. There is the apparent and formal language of a country's culture; its language, its art, its education system, its political ideology. No doubt a long study of the formal culture will yield interesting and sometimes useful information, but this takes time. But, the American who must do business overseas, in a country or area with which is unfamiliar, has one major problem Time. (Kelly, 1978)

Those with the least amount of time should contact someone who is knowledgeable and knows Italy. You should prepare questions to acquaint yourself. If you have an abundance of time, take a trip to Italy, observe and keep a notebook. If you cannot get away, you should study the culture through books, films and other sources.

CHAPTER III

Cultural Differences

The cultural differences section should provide the necessary information for the business traveler. This chapter provides the background of practical information about Italy, its culture and its people that a training program would include.

Location

Italy is a boot-shaped peninsula located in central southern Europe. It is bordered on the East by the Adriatic Sea, on the South and West by the Tyrrhenian Sea and Mediterranean Sea and on the North by the Lihurian Sea, the Alps, France, Austria and Slovenia. Italy is divided into three distinct sectors being North, Central and South. The country is very mountainous because of the Alps and the Apennines.

The country covers an area of 116,000 square miles and includes Sicily and Sardinia. It has a population of over 57 million of whom over three million live in Rome, the Capital. Most speak the natural language, Italian, which is derived from Latin but there are numerous dialects, indicating French, German, Spanish and Arabic influence. In addition, English is spoken.

Climate

Climatic conditions vary greatly from northern Italy to southern Italy to Sicily and to Sardinia. Temperatures range in the north from 14 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to 104 degrees Fahrenheit in the south. Because of this, the impact on the regions' production of food and animals is advantageous in the south and in the north the tourist industry welcomes the skiers from all over the world.

Italy has earthquakes and there are three volcanoes, Etna in Sicily, Vesuvius near Naples and Stromboli on a small island off the West Coast of southern Italy.

The Italian People

The people of Italy are predominately Italian except for about two percent who are foreign-born inhabitants. Basically, Italians are a homogenous group of people who are conservative and traditional. The Italian people look at time differently than Americans. They feel there is an abundance of time and do not rush to situations that they are committed to. They are extremely cautious and take their time before consummating a contract. They are very frank, speak their mind and are extremely family- oriented. The majority of Italians are Catholic and practice Catholicism.

Time Differential

For most of the year, Italian standard time is 6 hours ahead of the United States Eastern Standard Time. However, approximately the last weekend in March to the last weekend in September, the country has daylight saving time and sets the clocks ahead one-hour. Obviously, this is important largely for those communicating by telephone, facsimile and e-mail from the United States.

Government

In 1870, Italy was unified as a nation under a monarchy. However, because of the disastrous years of Fascist rule and World War II, in 1946 a referendum was voted in favor of a republic. There are two legislative bodies; a 325 seat Senate and a 630 seat Chamber of Deputies. This is known as a multi-party Republic. The President is the Chief of State and the Prime Minister is the head of the government (referred to in Italy as the President of the Council of Ministers).

The President is elected by parliament for a seven-year term. He is more than a figurehead and possesses enormous power. The Presidents role is almost identical to that once held by the King. The Presidents nominates the Prime Minister, appoints the ministers under the Prime Minister (upon the Prime Minister's recommendation), is commander of the armed forces and all the laws that are passed by

parliament must be signed by him.

Standard of Living

Among the 20 geographic regions of the country there is a wide range in the standard of living. The professional classes and upper and middle management enjoy a higher standard of living than those who are farmers and laborers do.

Education

Between the ages of six and fourteen, it is compulsory that Italian children attend school. Education is free through a universal system that has been established. However, the school and university facilities are often old-fashioned. The public schools consist of about 90 percent elementary and 85 percent high school. The others attend private schools that are operated by the Roman Catholic Church. The minister of education is responsible for all education and is a member of the cabinet. In addition, he supervises the main public libraries and museums.

Local governments control the elementary schools. The provincial and national governments operate the high schools and universities. There are many children that attend private nursery schools and kindergarten at the age of 3 or 4. When they are 6 years old, they begin a five-year elementary school program. If there are not university plans for the child, he or she attends a vocational school for

3 years or until the age of 14. In addition, there are technical schools available. The number attending the universities are smaller in comparison to the other schools.

Political System

Because of Italy's geographic structure, distinct regions have evolved. They each have their own culture, politics and dialect. Quite often there are multiple differences, thus the motto "Family First" was derived so as to protect not only their relatives, but also their regional cultures. Politically, by 1870, Italy had become a unified monarchy and the final monarch abdicated in 1946. Italy's most notorious political figure was Mussolini, a dictator who ruled from 1922 to 1946 when he was assassinated and the Fascists were overthrown.

Economy

About one-half of the economic activity in Italy is managed or owned by the state. There are many successful family-owned businesses in the northern and central regions of Italy thereby contributing to the country's dynamic growth. However, over time, its make-up has changed, especially in the last 40 years. Up to and during World War II, Italy was an agricultural country. Since then it has experienced a high growth and become industrialized and has enjoyed one of the highest growth rates in Europe and is presently ranked the fifth largest industrial nation in the world. In the construction and

cement industries, Italy is a world leader. Italian steel is second, only to Germany and fourth after Japan. The country exports metal, textiles and clothing, production machinery, motor vehicles, transportation equipment and chemicals. Italy imports industrial machinery, chemicals, transport equipment, petroleum, metals, food and agricultural products. Its natural resources are mercury, potash, marble, sulfur, dwindling natural gas, and crude oil reserves, fish and coal.

Businesses operating in Italy find it advantageous because of its modern rail and road capabilities that make it geographically feasible to trade with the entire Mediterranean region. In addition, there is an ample supply of skilled labor in the country. Also, the laws of Italy do not place any restrictions on foreign investments. The amount is unlimited.

The north is rich and industrial; the south is poor and agricultural. Other problems of the south are poverty, backwardness and crime. Part of the solution has been immigration to the north and leaving the country entirely. All together since World War II, the central government has invested capital in the south in various ways to correct the problems, but they continue to exist today; consisting of inflation, uneven distribution of wealth and unstable governments that contribute greatly to the problems.

The methods being used to tackle the problems are of a financial nature and the services are inadequate for which these firms are dependent which comes from the state. There are more than a thousand banks, six hundred of which are village savings banks of only local importance. The entire banking network is not adequate for the needs of the economy. Some leading public sector banks are being restructured and privatized partially in order to operate more efficiently.

The depression 1930 provided grounds for the Italians to be cautious. The Bank of Italy has been given powerful control over the banking system. However, in recent years, there has been a loosening effect, but the feeling is still not to go too far too fast.

The backbone of the economy consists of thousands of small private firms. They are quick in initiative, energetic and flexible but the problem is that they are unsophisticated financially and inexperienced internationally.

Despite the lack of natural resources, Italy has achieved an enormous rate of postwar growth. Although Italy has some natural gas, the most serious deficiencies are in fuels and Italy is dependent on imports for supplies of oil and coal. The Po Valley, Italy's most important natural region, is located in the foothills of the Alps. The farming system is highly inefficient and consequently does not meet

the food requirements for the country thereby causing large imports of cereals, meats, dairy, and produce. Italy is far from self-sufficient in food.

History

Italy has been so named for over 3,000 years. There is evidence of Latin/Italic tribes that date from 2000 BC. Around 1200 BC the Etruscans arrived and brought their own culture and laws, but conquered vast central areas of the peninsula. Around 600 BC, southern Italy was dominated by Greek civilization which inspired a large cultural influence on that region. Thus, much of the Greek culture was adopted.

Restaurant and Etiquette Protocol

Introduction/History

The first known guide to courteous behavior was written by Ptah-hetep, a high government official in ancient Egypt. His works, The Instructions of Ptah-hetep dates from around 2400 BC. An Italian named Tamasino di Circasia wrote one of the earliest European etiquette books, A Treasure on Courtesy.

When one speaks of etiquette, one thinks in terms of it as a guide to good manners in our relationships with others. The code of behavior that it establishes helps humans to get along with one another. It is more than a strict set of rules. Each culture has its own

system of etiquette and the systems do vary. But, in reality, the rules of conduct are the same. Its most important function is to assure courteous, considerate behavior towards others in everyday life.

Religion is linked to etiquette in Italy. This figures importantly in the consumption and non-consumption of food. For example, before the Catholic feast of Easter, Catholics do not eat meat on Fridays during Lent. Consumption is important also during Christmas Eve, when Catholics eat various kinds of fish. This is a tradition instituted by the early Church leaders centuries ago as a sacrament converted with the confession of a sin.

The Art of Dining

There is an extreme difference between eating and dining. True, both procedures entail putting food into the mouth, chewing it and swallowing. The difference is the sophistication of dining opposed to eating. Dining requires knowledge of many things in the restaurant and in the home. If one does not possess a basic *savoir-faire* when invited to a restaurant or home, it could prove to be an embarrassment or sometimes it could prove to be a disastrous experience.

If a luncheon or dinner invitation is offered, it is considered ungracious for the recipient not to accept. Also, never give a business

card to anyone at a social gathering.

Italians enjoy good food and dining, and as a result, they are punctual in doing so. Breakfast (la prima colazione) usually consists of a light meal of bread and butter and cappuccino (half-strong coffee and half-hot, foamy milk) or hot chocolate. The main meal of the day is luncheon and can last from 2 to 3 hours. However, the day does not end after luncheon. Everyone returns to business and work resumes. Supper is also a light meal consisting of soup, bread, cold cuts, salad, fruit and cheese.

When cheese is served one should never use fingers to pick up the cheese. A knife should be used. With the exception of grapes and cherries, fruit should not be eaten by hand. If wine is to be served, and it always is, the wineglass or glasses will be to the right of the water glass. If there is more than one kind of wine, the server will arrange the glasses in the order of service or bring the glass for each service.

When hosting a luncheon at a restaurant, it is very important to choose the proper one. If one does not know the better places, one should seek the help of his or her staff. If the luncheon is one-on-one, invite one's guest to suggest the restaurant. They take pride in doing this. You must take steps to avoid the guest's efforts to take the check before you, the host.

Plan to arrive early so you can meet the Maitre'd and the servers.

Ask for a table relatively private and free from distractions. Make it a point to determine where you are going to seat each person.

Be certain to give a credit card to the server, thereby avoiding any questions regarding who will pay the check. When your guests are seated, make suggestions from the menu to them. This will establish a price range so they will not feel uncomfortable when ordering.

One should keep the receipt from the restaurant check. It probably will not happen, but one could be stopped outside by the tax police. There is no need for alarm, they are checking to be sure the restaurant is abiding by the law.

If the napkin is a large dinner size, it is placed on the lap folded in half. Do not unfold it entirely. If the napkin is a smaller luncheon size version, open it all the way and place it on your lap. Never put a napkin under the chin or in a belt. If you leave the table for any reason during the meal, or when you leave at the conclusion of the meal, always place it loosely folded to the left of the remaining plate. Place the knife and fork in an inverted "V" position if you are returning to the table. Close the "V" if you have finished.

If food is served from a serving tray and you are a guest, do not take an abundance. The food is served from the left. The silver service fork is placed to the left of the spoon, with both utensils angled in toward the food so that the next person can easily pick

them up. Just take a small quantity of everything because more is coming. Avoid being satiated before the meal is over so that you do not offend the host because you are not eating every item.

When ordering from a menu, ask for an appetizer portion instead of entree size, particularly the pasta dishes. Italians believe in *grande* (large).

Using the correct silverware is actually quite simple. Start with the utensil furthest from your plate and work your way in toward the plate with each course. Italians eat with both hands above the table. They do not place one hand on the lap as Americans do.

There are two styles for cutting: the two-step European or Continental style and the four-step cross over American style. Both are acceptable but the European style is preferred in Italy. In the two-step method, the knife is held in the right hand (unless one is left-handed in which case you may reverse these directions) and the fork in the left throughout dining. With the tines of the fork facing down, the food is cut and the fork brought to the mouth, tines down.

Using the American method, you hold the fork in your left hand and knife in your right hand, cut the food item, place the knife across the top of the plate, switch the fork from the left hand to the right hand, pierce the food items with the fork and put the food in your mouth.

In reference to finger-bowls: they are genuinely helpful, particularly after eating artichokes, shellfish, corn on the cob, asparagus or any other hand held food. Artichokes are very popular in Italy. When the server brings the bowl with warm water, there is a slice of lemon floating on top of the water. One merely dips the fingers of one hand, then the fingers of the other hand into the bowl and wipes them with a fresh napkin that the server has provided. Never bring the water to your mouth.

If hot coffee or hot tea is served, do not blow on the beverage to cool it. Stir it quietly or wait until it cools. If some of the beverage has spilled into the saucer, ask the server for one that is clean.

Dining Etiquette in the Home

To be invited into one's home in Italy is a rare privilege. The Italian people cherish their privacy. Prior to the start of the meal, Italians usually wish everyone a good appetite and an enjoyable meal. (Buono appetite)

The following are some useful measures to pursue in the home:

- The Host and Hostess usually sit opposite each other at the middle of the table. The important male guest sits to the left of the hostess and the second most important guest to her right. Female guests are seated in the same manner next to the Host.

- The Host or another man will pour the wine. Italians consider it inappropriate for a woman to pour wine.
- Take tiny sips of wine, thereby keeping the glass almost full if you do not care for more. This will keep you from having to decline the invitation for more wine.
- The most important guest is served first.
- Do not begin to eat until the Hostess does.

Forks will be placed to the left of the plate. Knives and soup spoons will be placed to the right of the plate. The knife and fork placed above the plate and are for fruit. Do not eat any fruit except grapes and cherries with your fingers. Above the fruit knife and fork is the coffee or ice cream spoon.

Italians eat with the fork in their left hand and the knife in their right; using the knife to push food onto the inverted fork. It is known as the European style of eating.

Don't cut spaghetti or other types of pasta. Also, do not twirl it around your fork with the aid of a spoon. Take two or three strands at a time and twirl them around your fork using the deep sides of the pasta plate as you would a spoon. Don't expect to find a bread-and-butter plate. Bread or a roll is usually placed on the table at each place setting.

At a family meal in the home, it is permissible to sop up the gravy with bread if you see others doing it. Do not do this in a restaurant or at a dinner party. To be polite, decline seconds when they are first offered. The Hostess will insist. At this time, it is polite to accept. If you really cannot eat anymore, graciously say so. In the unlikely event that no one offers you seconds and you would like more, ask politely. The Hostess will feel very complimented.

When finished, place the knife and fork parallel on the plate, with the fork facing down. It is considered impolite to smoke between courses as it spoils the taste of the food that has been prepared for you. In Italy, children are allowed to dine with the family even if there are family guests. Pay attention to them and include them in your conversation when talking.

If planning on staying several days in a private home, expect to be given a napkin ring with a cloth napkin. At the end of each meal, fold the napkin and replace it in the ring. You will be given the same napkin at each meal. Clean napkins are put on the table every five (5) days.

Electricity is very expensive. When leaving a room, you should turn off all the lights. Always ask your Host or Hostess before you take a bath if it is convenient. This is done in order to conserve water.

Business Protocol and Procedures

Overture

In our global marketplace, it is crucially important to learn the customs and business manners of foreign countries. Other cultures' approaches to decision-making, to oral agreements and contracts, to business entertaining, and even to gift-giving can be quite different from those to which Americans are accustomed. The greeting of people, presenting business cards, punctuality and dress are just a few of the protocol one should know. If one knows the basic rules of both etiquette and protocol it will permit one to avoid embarrassing and uncomfortable situations. Prior to going to Italy, schedule a luncheon with people who have visited or lived in Italy so you can learn what to expect. Research a few newsmagazines on current events in Italy.

Americans quite often are embarrassed about their ignorance regarding other nations. People abroad will be pleased when you show you care and have an interest in them. While conducting business, be an Ambassador for the United States. Show appreciation for Italy's culture, its art, climate, architecture, cuisine, the beautiful landscape and whatever else merits praise. Don't be what we are sometimes accused of being an "ugly American"; loud, rude and ignorant of local customs.

If your company cares about Italy, it should strive to make its representatives become expert in protocol and be considerate of others. You should learn about others and their country and try to adhere to proper procedures.

Suggestions

When scheduling appointments keep in mind that business hours vary in the north and the south. There are a number of holidays that one should be made aware of, so check an Italian calendar. Most firms close in August for a vacation. Offices are open five days a week, some on Saturday morning.

Appointments should be made at least 2 to 4 weeks in advance. Italians prefer to do business with a person they have met at least briefly, rather than a meeting for the first time.

Be punctual! The business day starts at 8:30 a.m. and extends to 12:00 and beyond. Luncheon is from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., when business resumes. Business is never discussed at breakfast. There is no such thing as a working breakfast.

Italians prefer to briefly engage in small talk before discussing serious problems and business. The Italians are good-faith negotiators, but also known to be tough and shrewd. Ordinarily, one should involve an attorney and thereby avoid any misunderstandings. Money is not the only motivation for business in Italy. They often

value good relationships with people with whom they are conducting business.

Never assume that someone will speak English. Have a translator, an interpreter and a secretary available. Also, have your documents translated into Italian. This will save time. Have your business cards printed on both sides; English on one side and Italian on the other. Do not use first names unless invited to do so. Learning to speak a little Italian shows respect for the Italians as friends, as business associates and your interest in them.

All university graduates have a title and usually they expect you to use it. Examples are listed in table 1.

Table 1

Italiano	English
dottore	for liberal arts
arroato	for law
ingegnere	for technical fields
professore	for both professors and medical doctors
dottorressa	for feminine form
don vitto	for olive-oil dealers

LANGUAGE INITIATION

Italians are proud and most favorable when foreigners make an attempt and try to speak their language. The best preparation is to attend a school that teaches Italian. If this is not possible, at least learn the key phrases (phonetically) such as the ones listed in table 2.

Table 2

English	Italiano
Good Morning	Buono Giorno
Good Evening	Buona sera
How are you?	Comma sta
Thank you	Grat zee
Hello	Caio (Chow)
Goodbye	Arrivederci
Toast	Sah loo tay
Anytime	Prego
Yes	Si
No	No
Please	Por favore
Man	Signore
Woman	Signora
Woman (Single)	Signorina
Help	Ainto
Let me by	Permesso
Quick	Presto
Good appetite	Bon ah- pay tee-to
Listen	Ascolti
Look	Guardi
Look out	Attenzione
zero	o
one	uno
two	due
three	tre
four	quattro
five	conque

One can learn well by listening to a tape or reading a book in Italian. Every letter of the word is pronounced and many words are the same in English. When learning the structure of the meetings you are going to be engaged in, you should have an interpreter and a bilingual secretary if you know that the meetings are going to be conducted in Italian. It is extremely important that you have an understanding of what has transpired so you can react intelligently.

Apparel

In cities such as Rome, Italians dress quite elegantly; so bring your finest. Women should dress expensively, as Italians term this as an indication of success. The wearing of shorts in the cities is frowned upon and definitely not in churches or cathedrals. Jeans are accepted if they do not show signs of wear, tattered or dirty. Even casual wear in Italy is quite elegant. If your clothes are the least bit scruffy, you may feel uncomfortable. Also, remember it is traditional in Italy for women to cover their heads and arms when visiting churches and cathedrals.

For the opera, men should wear dark suits; the women should wear dresses and heels. At an opening performance, tuxedos and long dresses should be worn. The formal event of the year is the opening of the La Scala Opera season in Milan. This occurs in December.

Greetings

In Italy, handshaking is a national pastime, but you should avoid hand crushing and wearing large rings. The abbraccio (hug) is as common as the handshake between men and men and women and women. Shaking hands is something spontaneous. Whenever you meet someone, if only for a moment to say "hello" and "goodbye", shake hands.

Expect a bit of physical contact in greeting someone you know well. A kiss is given to each other on each cheek. It is a common sight to see women kissing women and men kissing men, as well as walking arm in arm down the street.

If there is no formal introduction, especially at parties, introduce yourself by stating your name and shaking hands. Do not use a person's first name until you are invited to do so. It is extremely impolite to ask someone you have just met what his or her occupation is or what they do for a living.

When greeting a woman professional or a woman who is married to a professional, you should use the prefix Miss or Mrs. with the title. for instance, Signorina Avocatessa (Miss Lawyer).

The following are sensitive topics to avoid in conversation: football, politics and America. It is permissible to respond about America if a question is asked. Some Italians consider it boring

hearing about America and they term it bragging. Feel free to talk about soccer, family affairs, business, current events, food, restaurants, etc.

When an older person enters a room, younger Italians always stand. They are extremely respectful of their elders and show it in multiple ways.

There is a ritual known as Passeggiare. It is from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. every evening. People dress in their finery and casually stroll through town. Often you meet someone and they or you will extend an invitation for coffee or an aperitif in a cafe.

Electricity

The current that flows through most of Rome is 220 volts, 50 cycles. Any appliances that run on 110 volts will need a converter and all equipment must be fitted with a two-pin, round shaped plug. When preparing presentations be certain to bring these required items.

Hotels

Leave your passport with the desk clerk in the evening upon retiring. The hotel is responsible to the police for various forms that have to be recorded. When answering the telephone say "pronto". Tokens are called gettoni. The Emergency Number is 113.

Leave your key at the desk when you go out for a lengthy period

or a short period. The management becomes very upset if you do not comply with this rule. Women traveling should stay in first class hotels.

If you go to a bar in a hotel, chances are someone will try to date you. If a man approaches you, do not respond to him.

Transportation

You pay one fixed rate on city buses, no matter how far you travel.

However, this rate may vary from city to city. Tickets may be purchased from newsstands near the bus stop. When you board the bus, put the ticket in the validation machine. Keep your ticket as Inspectors sometimes ask for the tickets and there are fines if you do not have one.

If you need a cab, go to a taxi stand. If you call for a cab, you must pay the distance of the drive from its origin to pick you up. Also, there is an additional 500 to 1,000 lire charge at night for a taxi. Avoid late night walks. In Milan and Rome the subways are usually safer near the center of the cities. But traveling a great distance after 11:00 p.m. is not recommended and a taxi should be called.

In Rome and Milan use the subway. The fare is a flat rate as well. There are coin-operated ticket machines in the subway stations. Keep your ticket, there are Inspectors.

Regarding trains, there are first and second class inter-city trains. A seat can be reserved on first class at the train station or at some

travel agencies. In large cities, buy your ticket before boarding the train. In smaller cities you can buy a ticket on the train but there will be a surcharge.

If you are a woman traveling alone by train, do not go into a compartment where there is only one man. If there is someone in your seat of a reserved train, call the train master and he will find you another seat. Do not throw away your ticket before exiting the train. If you wish to go onto the platform to see someone off in a large city, there is a platform charge.

Driving

Note that round signs mean that an activity is forbidden, square signs mean that it is allowed. Triangular signs warn drivers to be cautious. Be aware that there are no speed limits on highways. Italians tend to drive extremely fast. On major highways, use SOS telephones for emergencies. Push one button to call for a tow truck and another to call an ambulance. A light will come on when your message has been received. Look out for three-wheeled vehicles, scooters, bikes and motorcycles.

If you are stopped for a violation, pay the fine immediately or ask for an injunction, which allows you to pay at the police station. You can contest the ticket, but it is usually cheaper and easier to pay immediately. Bare in mind, fines can be very severe and range from

ten dollars to five hundred dollars depending on the offense.

Legal Matters and Safety

There is no legal drinking age and bars and restaurants are allowed to serve liquor 24 hours a day. Seek out a police officer that speaks English if one is needed in a large city. In small towns, the officers usually do not speak English, but they will try to find someone who can interpret. Should a lawyer be required, discuss the fee in advance. The Italian Bar Association does not accept cases on a contingent fee basis. To find a lawyer, ask at the Chamber of Commerce or the American Consulate.

There are police officers on all long distance trains. If you have any problems ask for them.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

The importance of knowing the proper protocol and etiquette while doing business in Italy is recapped in the final pages with the following interviews. The persons interviewed for this study are frequent travelers to Italy providing insight to the Italian experience.

This interview on business practices and customs was conducted with Joseph Canzeri, Chief Executive Officer of the Canzeri Company, a New York and Washington, D.C. based consulting firm.

Mr. Canzeri travels extensively throughout the world conducting international business. For the purpose of this project, he disclosed the following information about his travels in Italy on business.

He stated there are no restrictions regarding visa entry requirements. The only necessary document is a valid passport. There are two control points upon entering, one for the Italians and one for other foreign nationals. It moves very quickly.

One normally is met by a driver who takes the client to his or her hotel because driving is treacherous in all cities in Italy. There is great danger involved because of the motorists, trucks, compact cars, motor scooters, narrow streets, as well as unfamiliarity in struggling

to occupy the same space at the same time on narrow and unfamiliar streets.

There are a variety of hotels available for lodging from the Pensione (Bed & Breakfast) to the ultra deluxe establishments.

Before retiring for the evening, the traveler must surrender the passport to the desk clerk at the hotel. The police collect all passports and return them the following morning. This is known as a security check and it is only for the first night in residence. But should you go to another city, the passport must be surrendered again the first night.

The Italians, Mr. Canzeri reports, are friendly and helpful. Most of them know a little English and are pleased when you try to communicate in Italian.

Mr. Canzeri said he never had a bad meal in any part of Italy. The eateries, he says, are superior; Italians take exceptional pride in their culinary skills.

When asked about security, he said it was reasonably effective. He recommended that travelers avoid the side streets, be alert when going out at night, and keep away from unsavory places. Italian men, he concludes, are very vocal and outspoken in their encounters with women.

He makes the following observations with regards to touring.

One must decide specifically where one wants to go. He recommends that a traveler take part in the larger tour with everyone else. This will give the traveler the highlights. Then the traveler can do the tour again alone, getting more out of the visit. Rome, itself, is one monstrous monument. Of course, the Vatican is seen by appointment only. It is advantageous to buy a guidebook for whatever city you are visiting.

The shopping in Italy, in Mr. Canzeri's judgment, is the best in the world. His experience leaves him to believe that silk, leather, and perfume in Italy are of particularly high quality.

I asked Mr. Canzeri about the negative aspects. He said, basically, one must recognize the importance of Italian attitudes. No one gets excited. Domani (tomorrow). Their relaxed attitudes are contagious.

If you are traveling out of town, he suggests that you go by train. They have an excellent rail system and service which is extremely punctual and clean.

In the summertime in Rome, reservations are difficult to procure. For example, a church pilgrimage in the summer months means that hotel and restaurant accommodations are difficult to obtain.

In reference to Mr. Canzeri's business experiences in Italy, he maintains that on the whole, Italians are the most calculating and shrewd negotiators he has ever dealt with. First, they are extremely punctual; secondarily they cannot be rushed. Everyone is very business oriented. When a meeting starts there are no light moments. The Italians are all business at this point. The meeting facilities are always clean, comfortable, and accommodating.

Mr. Canzeri says that he has a basic knowledge of the language but always attends the meetings with an attorney and an interpreter. The dress code is never casual. A business suit and tie are mandatory. The women in attendance are always properly attired. The Italians are polite and well mannered but one should never confuse their good manners with softness. They are always thinking about doing what is best for their firms. Because of the pressure and concentration in the meetings, the lengthy luncheon breaks are most welcome. They never talk business during the luncheon.

It is a chore for a foreign businessperson to pay for the luncheon or dinner. The Italians are most gracious and consider you a guest in their country, entitled to be wined and dined at their expense.

It is rare that one is extended an invitation to socialize or dine in their homes. They make it a point to differentiate. They jealously

pursue their privacy and are family conscious. So it is not uncommon to witness the children conversing and dining with everyone else in the home.

Italy is one of his favorite countries, and he frequents it at every opportunity.

This interview was conducted with William Losapio, President of the Losapio Company in New York. He has done business in Italy for a number of years. He enjoys the country and respects the people.

The very first advice he offered was to be forewarned, and to prepare thoroughly to negotiate business in Italy on your own. It is extremely difficult to go to Italy and expect to be successful without any help. One really should have a local representative advising you. He suggests contacting the U.S. Embassy if you are at a loss as to where to turn for help. He speaks Italian but feels more comfortable when he can ask questions of his advisor, who is someone he can trust.

He recommends the following approaches: Do not go there expecting to introduce yourself, sit down, and complete your business in an hour. We Americans are usually direct, frank, and concise in finalizing a deal. This is not so in Italy, he said. You must conform to their standards. Italians are a very relaxed group and can not and will not be rushed. Furthermore, he said, you should spend a few days

prior to your meeting walking around the city and talking with people and private sector organizations. This will give you a sense of the political and economic structure of the locale you are visiting. In this regard, a lot can be accomplished on your own.

He said he remembered very vividly his first trip to Italy to conduct business. He was met by an Italian representative and taken to a restaurant where he had made a reservation for lunch. It was shortly after he had exchanged pleasantries with his perspective client, that he began his business presentation. This procedure, he realized, was not the thing to do. Very politely and firmly he was told that the two could start their discussion later at the office and not at the meal. He said he was extremely embarrassed by this gaffe and never made that mistake again.

Mr. Losapio maintains that there is a wealth of information available on business etiquette but it is often not utilized. For example, the International Trade Administration (ITA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce is a valuable source of information regarding American firms doing business globally. In addition, he said, he has taken advantage of the services rendered by the U.S. Foreign Commercial Services Offices. They have offices in Italy and will give advice regarding how to get started, where to find potential buyers or

distributors and how to compete for Italian contracts. Additionally, the American Chamber of Commerce offers many significant services.

I asked Mr. Losapio about the negative aspects of the country. His reply was that during the political season, campaign banners representing the many political parties, hang over the streets for weeks and weeks prior to elections. After awhile, they become an eyesore. He also observed that there never seems to be enough time to see all the wonderful works of art.

During all the years he has visited Italy, he has never neglected to bring gifts. Regardless of one's station in life, Italians treasure any gift from America. He feels it is a warm and cordial way to become acquainted.

In closing, he advised against underestimating the Italians. They are very knowledgeable business people and always do their homework. When they come to a meeting, they are prepared. He suggests that all Americans doing business in Italy know their facts because the Italians know theirs and they will put you to the test.

This was a personal interview with Robert Armao of New York. He is a consultant for various firms and a financier that does business all over the world. At one time, the Shah of Iran was a client. He still handles the Shah's family in the United States.

In our conversation, he spoke of the many trips he has made to various cities in Italy and how much he enjoys going there. However, he does find himself making comparisons with America.

He said he found out early on that you should not expect immediate results in whatever your business endeavors are while in Italy. With the exception of the large Italian conglomerates with professional management, a great number of Italian companies are either family owned or have a bureaucracy that requires a great deal of discussion.

Mr. Armao maintains that you should not expect medium-sized Italian companies to understand the size of complexity of the United States market or expect them to do sophisticated market research on it. Conversely, you must establish a brand identity before being able to penetrate the Italian market and do the appropriate market research, which fortunately, is widely available in the U.S.

American businesspersons should also be wary of being aggressive in attempting to sell products and services. Italians are used to a great deal of analysis and discussion.

One should study the background and history of the company that is being targeted in order to appreciate their business philosophy. Also, it is important to know about the region in Italy that you are visiting, as the Italians are historically provincial in attitude. Even

though it is seen at a lesser extent now, regional rivalries still exist. One must understand that Italy was once a feudal city-state system composed of many independent states, finally united under the King of the de Savoia House in the 1800's.

It is important for the American businessperson to study the tax laws, currency control and tariffs carefully. Italian law, like most, is very confusing. The European union set up has alleviated much of the bureaucracy.

The function of the Italian law firm is not as far reaching as American firms. The legal profession in Italy is not considered a power center or necessarily respected or feared. American lawyers are held in much higher regard in Italy.

It is necessary to have a mechanism for settling disputes built into any contract. International arbitration is more preferential than going through the Italian court system.

At any cost, one should remember to avoid Italian politics. Interaction with the Italian political system could cause many problems for foreigners and Mr. Armao suggests that we could never understand its intricacies.

Mr. Armao presented a case study of the Piaggio Aircraft Company of Milan, Italy. Several years ago, the Piaggio Aircraft Company, one of the leading manufacturers of private aircraft, sold its

aircraft maintenance division to a consortium made up of manufacturing and investment groups under the Czech government. Recently, the Piaggio Aircraft Company was placed on the market for sale. Ironically, the Piaggio Aircraft Maintenance Company was also offered for sale.

Several international investment firms were hired to look at the prospective purchase. Amaranth Communications was engaged by one of the potential bidders to study the Piaggio Aircraft Maintenance Company. Meetings were conducted in Milan with the company's executive staff.

The following relate general observations from the meetings. Direct air flights are now more frequent between New York and Milan. Hotel availability has increased dramatically over the past ten years; once more internationals were able to operate properties there.

Piaggio Aircraft Maintenance, like many Italian companies, has interlocking family relationships between the managing executives and those of other conglomerates. Birth, marriage, school, or region very often relates the leaders of corporations and conglomerates in Italy.

The attitude about tax collection historically made it difficult to see the true financial condition of an Italian company. Today, the tax structure is more streamlined. The prospective purchaser must still

exercise caution in reviewing reports on financials of these companies. The potential purchaser should also study the company's union, its strength, and aggressiveness and benefit structure. Potential purchasers must be patient because Italians are slow to make decisions. They are also subject to long, extravagant meals. Business often centers around socializing.

The following interview was provided by Vincent Scalzo of Toncar srl of Via Pavia 38/40, 20053 Muggio, Milan, Italy. This 50 year old family-owned company makes print-scrutinized cards and performs packaging and publishing services. It has 50 employees and two factories. The company wished to establish a market for products in the United States.

The company's product line consisted of bar-coded telephone cards (European telephone companies), athletes' collection cards (mostly of soccer players), promotional items for movie promotions, game cards and general printing products.

In the past, the company, like other Italian corporations, traditionally operated in family groups, with decision-making performed at the highest levels.

Today, Italian companies are becoming more modern in structure. Large outside shareholders (non-family), outside directors

and senior management play shared roles in corporate strategy and planning.

In the past, marketing in Italy was carried out differently than in the United States. Basically, Italian companies has little understanding of the vast size of the U.S. market. The average Italian company did not grasp the need for mass marketing and advertising in a highly competitive America. Italian-American firms had to show the Italians the clear relationship between substantial advertising investment and actual sales.

At the same time, Mr. Scalzo, in an effort to help Toncar srl, had to perform research on the company's competition and their products.

The findings were that the Italian company's pricing was very competitive because they are not obliged to meet the demands of a strong employee-union. Large competitors have strong unions which protect their members' jobs, particularly in the United States and Canada.

The Scalzo research also found that Italian companies excel in design for products, often superior to those made elsewhere. Also, he concluded that Italian manufacturing machinery is also very advanced.

Finally, the research uncovered that Italian companies require considerable attention to social amenities because a great deal of

business is conducted during meals. Italians also devote a great deal of time to discussion and analysis.

Summary

In summary, this study's purpose was to provide a better understanding of the proper protocol and etiquette while doing business in Italy. One headed for Italy must see clearly the pronounced cultural differences to be encountered. The surest way to make business progress in Italy is through connections. Corporations and individuals can avoid these conflicts by adhering to the protocol, etiquette and cultures of Italy.

As more and more companies conduct business around the world, they find there is a greater need to acquire the basics in protocol and etiquette as it relates to the country they are visiting. Businesses that send people to Italy should realize that the better educated and informed they are about the country, the more successful the business pursuit may be. The company must be supportive of its employees in the endeavor to understand the host country and seek to learn as much as possible before leaving so as to be successful.

In the world today, learning the necessary customs and practices of foreign countries is paramount. If one understands the basic rules of both protocol and etiquette, it will help avoid uncomfortable

situations and lost business opportunities.

The opportunity to explore the culture of Italy hopefully has afforded a better understanding of the country and its people.

The interviews provided by frequent travelers to Italy highlighted the general business atmosphere to anticipate if you plan to conduct business there. They reinforced the author's findings.

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